

TOWN OF AMHERST
Historic Preservation Commission
May 11, 2021

Meeting held via Zoom

Call to Order: 7:04pm

(X before name indicates in attendance)

Members present: x Joseph Buscaglia x Norman Hirschey ☐ Mary Lou Mancuso
x Brian Swartz x Susan Palmer ☐ Paul Redding x Catherine Waterman-Kulpa

Resource Personnel present: ☐ Gail Adema ☐ Jay Kajdas ☐ Carrie Stiver (BNHV)
☐ Jitendra Vaidya ☐ Kevin Zynda ☐ Robert C. Beiswanger ☐ Thomas Klementowski
☐ Robert Marcus

Town Departments present: x Deborah Bruch Bucki (Town Board Liaison) x Roberta Rappoccio
x Ann Demopoulos x Dan Howard x Bryan Fadel

Minutes of April 13, 2021:

Moved to approve: B. Swartz

Second: C. Waterman-Kulpa

Vote: 5-0

New Business

1. 211 Ruskin – Application for Demolition Approval

John Gavigan, who resides at 211 Ruskin Road, presented the partial removal of an 8' x 14' plywood shed roof pool house attached to the back of the garage. Plans are to reconfigure the building with an updated pool house with an extended roof. C.

Waterman-Kulpa inquired what the date of the survey that was submitted, to which Mr. Gavigan replied was September 10, 2019. C. Waterman-Kulpa and B. Swartz agreed that the structure does not appear to be an original part of the home. N. Hirschey asked if building was in resource survey from 2017 and C. Waterman-Kulpa said that addresses are sometimes grouped together.

Moved to approve the demolition permit with condition not to disturb the attached original structure, and if it is, then replace-in-kind: B. Swartz **Second:** C. Waterman-Kulpa **Vote:** Ayes 5, Noes 0.

2. August 7th Preservation Day Event

S. Palmer presented the plan for the Preservation Day on Saturday, August 7th. The current subcommittee is made of S. Palmer, C. Waterman-Kulpa and C. Stiver. It will be a free, but ticketed, outdoor event at the Buffalo Niagara Heritage Village open to the public from 10am to 4pm. Historical preservation information and educational activities will be presented using the Heritage Village properties as examples. This will be a family-friendly event with a scavenger hunt that ends in the center of the Heritage Village, where the Amherst Historical Preservation Committee and other local committees will have tables set up to showcase historical properties and other educational resources. There are also plans to have food trucks in the parking lot. Strong attendance is expected and volunteers will be asked to interact with guests, manning the table, setting up both on Friday night and Saturday, among other things. S. Palmer will send out an email directed to Resource Personnel to assist with the event.

OLD BUSINESS

1. CLG Grant Award – Preservation Day – August 7, 2021

2. Revision to Forms: A. Landmark Application – Current Form; Draft Proposed Application for Landmark Designation

S. Palmer discussed having met with J. Quinn and the Planning Department to finalize the three forms that were approved at the previous HPC meeting. New forms will be up on website as soon as the last few logistical issues are resolved. Members agreed that the forms looked good, although there may need to be some tweaks in the future.

Moved to approve Application Content for Landmark Designation: N. Hirschey **Second:** B. Swartz **Vote:** Ayes 5, Noes 0.

3. Proposed AHPC Rules of Order

S. Palmer presented the Rules of Order and said an email was sent out regarding the subcommittee. D. Bucki asked to be included. A. Demopoulos said she will forward changes out to the Board. The HPC set a date for rules working group on June 2nd @ 6:30pm via Zoom.

4. Proposal for Revision of the Historic Preservation Law of the Town of Amherst

S. Palmer presented utilizing the same working group to consider amending the Historic Preservation Law.

Motion to have working group explore possibility of amending Historic Preservation Law: S. Palmer. **Second:** C. Waterman-Kulpa **Vote:** Ayes 5, Noes 0.

5. Landmark Application Submission – 625 Frankhauser

S. Palmer stated that the application was received a few months ago, but the matter had been adjourned because they did not have enough information. If there is no response after 30 days, the application can be removed.

Motion to remove the Landmark Application for 625 Frankhauser from the agenda:

S. Palmer **Second:** C. Waterman-Kulpa. **Vote:** Ayes 5, Noes 0.

6. BNHV Properties – Update on Research for Possible Landmarking

N. Hirschey said they did not meet last month, but that everything has been completed except for one property that needs to have the application drafted.

7. Westwood – Possible Landmark

C. Waterman-Kulpa presented that Westwood is the first Jewish country club in area and possibly New York State, and the clubhouse has had multiple additions. HPC went to look at the buildings a couple years ago and collected photographs and drawings of both the original building and additions to help date portions of the building. If and when the Town acquires the property, the intention is to keep the clubhouse and find a new purpose for it. The Town Board has expressed an interest in locally landmarking the building and possibly a State National Register listing to possibly acquire funds for rehabilitation. B. Swartz raised concerns over the building's condition and preserving the building, to which C. Waterman-Kulpa responded that she not does believe there are any current leaks and that the building is stable. A. Demopoulos added that she is not aware of any housing court violations.

8. Harlem Road Community Center

C. Waterman-Kulpa said she is working on it and S. Palmer is trying to get information from Amherst Central Schools.

9. Education Plan

August 7th Preservation Day Event at Buffalo Niagara Heritage Village as discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

10. St. Pauls; St. Benedicts

C. Waterman-Kulpa had nothing new to report.

11. Forest Lawn Project

D. Bucki said things are still being discussed in regards to Amherst Central Park and just before pandemic, Forest Lawn was one of components of the project. She has not heard anything else new about it in the last year and said that it can be removed from the agenda, but they might want to put it back on in the future.

Motion to remove Forest Lawn Project from the agenda: C. Waterman Kulpa. **Second:** J. Buscaglia **Vote:** Ayes 5, Noes 0.

12. Historic Entranceway at Main and Lamarck

C. Waterman-Kulpa stated that DOT gave a response and they cited a guideline. She wants to see if they could put together an argument to ask for more than what they wanted to provide. A. Demopoulos suggested working with J. Quinn and R. Rappoccio on this.

13. Eggertsville Burial Grounds – Sign Dedication Ceremony

S. Palmer said that they are hoping to have a ceremony in July or August, and should have more information at the next meeting. They are considering incorporating something small with St. Benedicts. S. Palmer would like to talk to C. Waterman-Kulpa more about this. C. Waterman-Kulpa said that St. Pauls has a lot of information regarding the building on their website and that St. Benedicts might as well. She will work with D. Bucki regarding information to get things done.

14. Notifications for Blue-Rated Properties

A. Demopoulos was asked to bring up the subject of blue-rated property notification by the Supervisors office. C. Waterman-Kulpa inquired if there is any correspondence between the Town and new homeowners. D. Howard responded that the Assessor's office used to send out a letter to new homeowners, but that has not been done for some time. B. Swartz said that Erie County sent him something when he bought a new house, but that he did not receive anything from the Town. C. Waterman-Kulpa questioned whether any extraordinary lengths needed to be taken to notify homeowners and S. Palmer agreed, stating that the only thing a blue-rated property owner would not be able to do is demolish. D. Howard said that Assistant Planner J. Quinn is in the process of making sure that information for all blue-rated properties is included in IPS. He also said that an annotation to CPI and possibly the County's system would be a good idea. D. Bucki suggested that perhaps the responsibility should fall more on the seller and attorneys at the time of closing. A. Demopoulos believes it is the perspective buyer's responsibility to acquire the zoning of their property and how the property is monitored by the municipality they reside in. She also stated that blue-rating does not pop up anywhere during closing process and it is not the burden of the seller or the realtor. In that the Assessor's office is informed when a property changes hands, B. Swartz suggested that they should perhaps notify a new homeowner like they used to. A. Demopoulos said she would talk to the Assessor's office to see what they have done and would could possibly done in the future. S. Palmer stated that blue-rated items had never been prevented from being on the agenda, even last-minute items, and B. Swartz mentioned that putting items on at the last minute can lead to issues later on. A. Demopoulos suggested that rules be included that applicants must give the HPC at

least one week notice and D. Bucki agreed that 7-10 days seems reasonable. B. Swartz said it can be up for discussion for the working group meeting on June 2nd.

Adjourn: 8:32 pm

Moved to adjourn: J. Buscaglia

Second: B. Swartz

Vote: 5-0

The next Regular meeting is scheduled for June 8, 2021.